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Guild
HISTORICAL

Wagner's

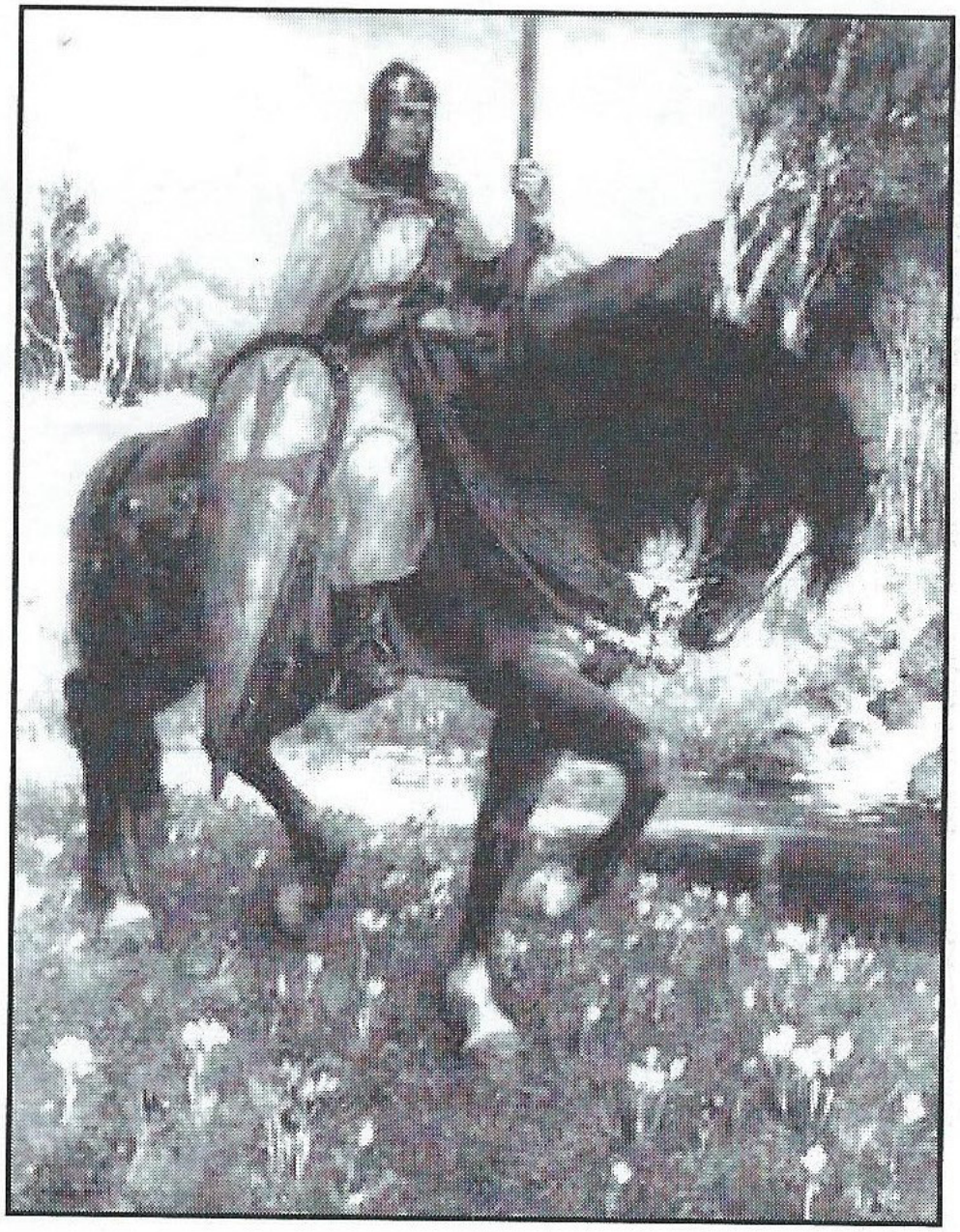
PARSIFAL

ACT II COMPLETE

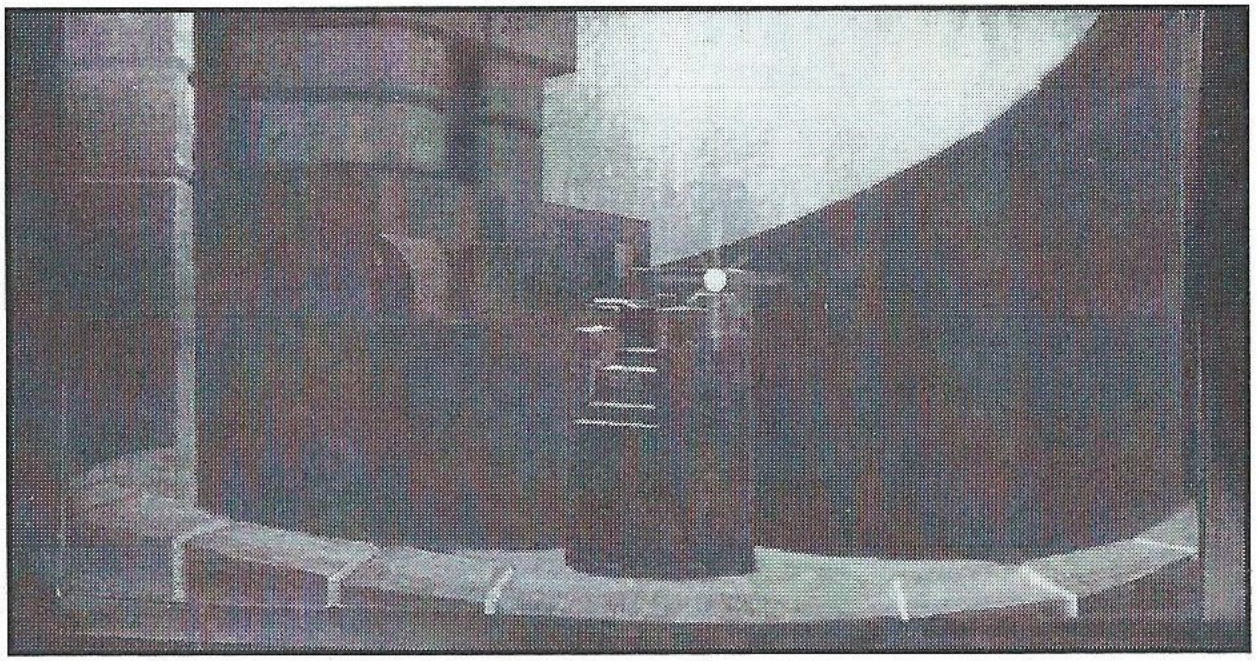
LAURITZ MELCHIOR
KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD
ARNOLD GABOR

Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera
Vocal Ensemble & Chorus
ERICH LEINSDORF

1938



Parsifal in quest of the Holy Grail
Ferdinand Leeke (German) 1859-1925



Metropolitan Opera setting for Act II, Scene 1

PARSIFAL

ACT II ❁ COMPLETE ❁ 1938

During the years that constituted the Golden Age of Wagner at the Metropolitan Opera, an era in which some of the greatest Wagnerian singers seemed to embody in their voices the ideal of Wagner's music and text, Kirsten Flagstad and Lauritz Melchior were supreme. We have come to verify the truth of this through hearing them both in public performances of Tristan, Walküre, Siegfried and Götterdämmerung, but we have not had a preservation of them in a theater performance of Parsifal. Only the RCA Victor studio performance of the Parsifal-Kundry scene has verified what music critics celebrated, the appearance of these two in the annual performance of Parsifal at the Met.

Lawrence Gilman, music critic for the World Telegram wrote:

"As for Mme. Flagstad . . . her roles are being constantly enriched in beauty and significance from the seemingly inexhaustible store of her inspired sympathy and comprehension, and her Kundry shares in that process.

The music of the role had never been sung as she sings it, nor the words of the text enunciated with the fullness of meaning she gives them."

He wrote of Melchior that:

"Parsifal has been his capital achievement. He has grown extraordinarily in his mastery of its musical style. . ."

These and other glowing attributes have tantalized music lovers, but the full clarity of what was achieved in Act II when these two sang together was only suggested by the studio recording. Here, in the disc issue by Guild, comes the opportunity to hear Flagstad's Kundry, sung at the height of her interpretative and vocal powers, in a good-sounding preservation of the complete Act II from the Metropolitan Opera broadcast.

As for Melchior, he emerges as the Parsifal of our dreams, his voice representing in every way the Parsifal that Wagner's text and music implies. We have become so used to vocalism from a far lower level that Melchior comes across as inconceivably good, even though we know from so many of his broadcasts how electrifying a voice was his. Here he sings with a vocal radiance in which his voice, shining with purity, strength and innocence, transists to a shattering anguish at his cry Amfortas! recreating for our ears the turning point in Parsifal's life-direction.

Flagstad belongs in his company, what with the loveliness of her tone, the strange aura of elevation, which contrasts with her words and intent,

dimensionalizing the enigma of this double-sided woman. Flagstad's phrasing of Dich, reinen Thoren: Parsifal and especially the succeeding line So reif, da in arab' schem Land er verschied dem Vater Gamuret dem Sohne zu . . . is simply ravishing! This is true magic, utter entrancement, and among the loveliest things Flagstad has ever sung. Her tantalizing beauty is wonderfully symbolized by her voice. These lines haunted me for hours afterwards. Even days later I could hear her voice, her phrasing singing these particular words. I have revered other voices as Kundry, but only Flagstad occupies the same vocal plane as Melchior. Never was this more clear than in the long duet that is the dramatic and psychological center of Parsifal.

The second act opens with Klingsor in his dark castle seen mounting a stair to a magical globe from which shines a blue light. Gabor's voice greatly suits Klingsor's character; it has a steel-like tone in its malevolent force; it sounds devoid of all warmth by the pressure of his corruptive intent. Klingsor comes across as a once morally strong knight deposed by his defects. His rage against the virtuous is suffused with a snarling contempt punctuated by the mirthless laughter of self-satisfaction. He knows by sending Kundry against Parsifal, whom he sees as no more than a boy and a fool, he will conquer yet another candidate who hoped for Knighthood. Even so, he is concerned that the youth's very innocence may, in some way, protect him from Kundry.

Klingsor derives his force from the concentration of negative energies that form the polar reaction to the moral forces which compose the world of light from which he has fallen. Klingsor can well be said to represent evil, not an evil created out of hurtful ignorance but conscious, willful, knowledgeable use of injurious means to immoral ends, marked by delight in the suffering and losses of others. The polar opposite of Klingsor's world and power is compassion, faith and love. It is the divided loyalties of Kundry, one half of her belonging to Klingsor's world, the other devoted to the Knights of the Grail and their elevation that is the conjunction which poses the central issue in Wagner's music drama.

Kundry is one of Wagner's most complex characters, combining as she does

elements of both the dark and light spheres. She is at first an enrapturing maiden; then a mother figure; then the seductress luring Parsifal to the same decline into sensuality as led to the wounding of Amfortas; then a figure who represents the evil of Klingsor's world, of a magic untouched by the serene, simple naturalness of the forests and meadows of the Grail. Kundry, who is both a beneficent and malefic factor in the drama, is haughty, indomitable and craven, yet capable of being unwittingly instrumental to something elevated. Her character encompasses human nature engorged on physical or outward passions but not so much as to eclipse an inner spiritual world to which she is drawn, suggesting her own penitence and transformation in Act III. In Act II, however, Kundry is still bound to Klingsor's power and remains bent on the destruction of Parsifal. Unable to tempt the youth, once Parsifal has psychically experienced Amfortas' agony (*Der Wunde!*), Kundry unveils her final transformation — the ultimate temptation:

"If in my arms I might take thee, it would then a God surely make thee!"

When Parsifal refuses even this, then she concedes she is a fallen woman, dishonored by her association with Klingsor and his magic, and sings:

"Let me, divine one, but love thee, Redemption then would I seek."

Has he not any compassion for this? The sublime emotion he lacked when he encountered Gurnemanz and Amfortas in Act I, he now has through experiencing Amfortas' suffering. In compassion he will have found his highest capacity, but this, too, Parsifal refuses her. He does not pity her need which was, in fact, a trap and a dishonor, rather he invokes for her a different level of salvation. In response to this, Kundry reveals herself. Swollen now with the self-importance for which she has sold herself, she curses Parsifal, calling upon Klingsor's powers to smite him with the Sacred Spear.

This scene is the core of Wagner's inspired drama. Its elevated world, seen in Act I & III, constitutes wings at either side of this fundamental conflict. Such a scene, such music, requires voices of the highest order, voices that embody in their very tone the archetypes about whom Wagner wrote.

Paul Jackson in his cherishable book, *Saturday Afternoons at the Old Met,* thought Melchior and Flagstad "at the peak of their vocal form" in the 1938 broadcast of Parsifal though he felt the role of Kundry "unlikely for this most heroic of Wagnerian goddesses." However, he goes on to tell us,

"Flagstad has a surprise in store for us. The first notes which Parsifal hears are suffused with a soft, girlish glow, like the ravishing warmth of a low flute, while the phrases are languorously spun out in an easy, natural flow. Ich sah das Kind is a fascinating web of subtly varied lines and gently flowing tone. This is a Flagstad almost never encountered; she has left off her architectonic manner — where she is wont to manipulate her magnificent instrument like a mighty pipe organ, pulling out stops in block fashion in response to some grand schema — in favor of a seductive fluency of tone and line. And thus, though Parsifal himself may resist, Flagstad conquers the role. Her wordplay is also uncharacteristically expressive, particularly in the phrases preceding the kiss. Amfortas! die Wunde! cries Melchior in powerful tones, the dark baritonal timbre which he employs throughout most of the role mixed momentarily with a thrust of bright color. The vocal squeeze in his production provides a built-in semblance of pain which is most effective in this scene. Kundry's pleas become increasingly urgent, and now Flagstad gradually returns to a more heroic mold, her voice gaining in power and thrust. Unlike most soprano interpreters of the role, she has all the solidity of tone in the lower mezzo range (where so much of the role lies), but in contrast to struggling mezzo Kundrys (who must rely on realistic shrieks for the high B-flats and Bs which pepper the end of act two). Flagstad repeatedly strikes these notes like clarion bells. All the wild exultation of Kundry's outbursts comes over. As Kundry recalls her laughter at the Saviour (und lachte), the fearsome intervallic leap is dead center on the mark; the moment is dramatically chilling while her vocal prowess thrills, as does the powerful shaft of tone on the final high B when

Kundry calls on Klingsor to claim Parsifal. Melchior is magnificent as he seizes the spear and vanquishes Klingsor."

Jackson was listening to a horridly bad-sounding preservation endisced by Edward J. Smith from exceedingly worn, atrociously noisy acetates preserving tinny, miniscule sound as might be heard in the 1930s over trans-Atlantic radio in a thunderstorm. Fortunately for us, Jackson could listen clean through this disastrous noise and convey to us the merits and faults of these performances while we were unable, ourselves, to bear the terrible reproduction.

Leinsdorf, who replaced Bodanzky for Act II, is the young, grippingly vital and expressive conductor we revere from his early years at the Met. He provides the thrilling foundation for the refulgent singing heard from these private discs. The recording was made by a New York dub service for a professor, now deceased, who greatly esteemed Flagstad and so he had the recordist preserve Act II only. And while we wish we had Act III, what is offered here is true treasure, a vocal grandeur which has no parallel in any other recording made of this act of Parsifal. Here, then, is a truly memorable broadcast on Good Friday, April 15, 1938 that came into our hands despite our belief that no sonically acceptable recording had been made or had survived. We rejoice in the privilege of making this available.

Richard Caniell

SOURCE AND BROADCAST HISTORY

For at least 30 years it was believed that no preservation existed of this broadcast of Parsifal on Good Friday afternoon, April 15, 1938. Then Edward J. Smith, that indefatigable entrepreneur whose love of music and generous spirit made him into the best regarded and best known "pirate," issued 3 LPs of this broadcast in 1969, under the initials EJS, from a set of private acetates recorded by a collector over the radio. The sound had a break every seven minutes for the recordist to change sides but that was not the worst problem — the sound was atrocious. Frankly, as much as I revered Melchior and Flagstad and wanted to hear Schorr as Amfortas, I couldn't endure listening to it.

For the next 30 years, the privately pressed Smith discs, given very limited circulation, were all that existed. Then Myto issued the Smith discs on CD, but its terribly bad sound was a painful disappointment to purchasers, even though it was something of importance to musicologists and music critics. Indeed, listening to the Smith discs, Paul Jackson was able to give a meaningful and evocative review of the performance in his book *Saturday Afternoons at the Old Met*. So EJS' endeavor was successful in a way that surely went beyond his hopes.

During the 50 years I sought out copies of Met broadcasts, I was thrilled by what important broadcasts had occurred and what had been preserved despite NBC's policy of sending their transcription discs to the grinder every five years. On the other hand, what was not broadcast was also a source of tribulation. The Met's management policies assigned operas for broadcast dates without regard to preserving a representative range of operas or the remarkable casts in various productions. In instances where no commercial recordings were made at the time, only the broadcast companies' transcriptions, or in many cases, recordings "pirated" off the air by private recordists, have preserved performances from that era. When there was no broadcast, the performances, often some of the greatest in

history, were lost for all time.

It is not only that there was no Parsifal broadcast between 1938 and 1952 but that enormously important operas, with some of the greatest singers in the century, were never broadcast while others were repeated. For instance, in 1939 there were two broadcasts of Tristan, one on February 18th and one on April 8th while others were not broadcast at all: Götterdämmerung, which was sung with Melchior and Marjorie Lawrence; Elektra with Rosa Pauly, Schorr and Thorborg, Walküre with Melchior, Rethberg, Schorr, Flagstad and Risë Stevens; Parsifal with Melchior, Flagstad, Schorr and List on March 8th.

Similarly in 1940 we had two broadcasts of Faust, one in March and another in April with identical casts, yet there were two Parsifals with Melchior, Flagstad, Schorr and Kipnis, neither one of which received a broadcast. The Flying Dutchman with Schorr and Flagstad, Maison and Thorborg, and another with Janssen and Flagstad, were never broadcast; neither was a Götterdämmerung with Melchior, Marjorie Lawrence, Schorr, Branzell and List, nor another performance of this work with Melchior and Flagstad and the same cast except Thorborg sang Waltraute.

The history of Parsifal performances, most of them with Melchior, Janssen and Kipnis or List with Thorborg or Bampton as Kundry, went on for years without being broadcast. There were three in 1942 and three in 1943, five in 1944, three in 1945, four in 1946, three in 1947 and so on. This is a shocking loss if one considers how many Bohèmes, Toscas, Traviatas, Carmens and Fausts were broadcast. This is not to say that these popular operas did not deserve representation but not every season and at the expense of immensely important Wagner performances with extraordinary casts. Instead, we got a Cavalleria with Flesh, a disastrous English language Fidelio and an equally forgettable Falstaff in the same wrong language. The Warrior received a broadcast and was instantly forgotten, and while we did get Meistersinger, for two years only part of the opera was broadcast in each instance.

It was this painful history which was in my mind when I had the enormous good fortune to locate a defective but salvageable complete Götterdämmerung (1936) and the 1938 Parsifal Act II in rather good sound for the period. Actually, I was given access to Parsifal through the immense generosity of a knowledgeable collector, Carl Volkers, a member of our Music Society. He informed me that he believed such a preservation existed on unmarked aluminum discs jumbled together in cartons in a basement; this the remains of a collection by a now-deceased professor who was enamored of Flagstad and had her performances professionally recorded. Mr. Volkers had the aluminum discs sent to me and while the second act of the 1937 Walküre had vanished, there was half of Act III; most of Act III of a 1938 Tristan, a few discs from Act II of a 1938 Siegfried, and, wonder of wonders, the entire Act II of Parsifal. I thought I was dreaming. This Parsifal was on sixteen 12" aluminum discs.

When we finally obtained them, I was amazed at the solid range of reproduction. This act, whatever else may be its sporadic defects, has solid, closely focused sonics though afflicted with many ticks and much grit and with some groove wear from use. The delight I experienced came from having heard only the extremely poor EJS discs. Nevertheless, music lovers who obtained these LP discs heard that Melchior and Flagstad were indeed the greatest exponents of the roles of Parsifal and Kundry even if it took patience to listen through the nerve-lacerating noise.

I relate this because it is doubtlessly the foreground to me feeling that the sonics of this magnificent performance are, comparatively speaking, quite good despite its often noisy sides. The defects are not exceedingly grave. Sometimes the original cutter developed a "pick-up chip." This caused the stylus to jump to the edge or rim of the groove, producing a few seconds of excessive noise, but it occurs only a few times. We managed to overcome this by repeated experimentation with different stylii, weight and tracking force. In addition, the instantaneous recording technique often lost chords or words at either the end or beginning of discs.

We did have to patch in six of Kundry's words (*wahn ich sein Auge schon nah'*) from Flagstad's commercial recording. The clip-off of chords does mean, however, that there are a few clumsy joins in our transfer that we couldn't improve because in two instances a few orchestral notes were missing.

To further honor Melchior's justly famed Parsifal, this CD is filled out with the finale to the third act of Parsifal with Melchior and Herbert Janssen from The Opera House of our Dreams Series. This performance is offered as a Memorial to Lauritz Melchior's final performance of Parsifal which he sang at the Met on March 23, 1948 with Janssen. (The entire scene [22:12 minutes] will be found on a forthcoming Guild CD devoted to the vocal art of Herbert Janssen.)

The Act III excerpt begins shortly before Amfortas' *Mein Vater!* Hoch gesengneter der Helden! and goes on to include Melchior's Nur eine Waffe taugt (Victor 1938) weaving this greatly admired recording into an authentic musical and dramatic context.

When you have heard the entire CD, I hope it will have provided a deeper experience of what effect Parsifal had back in those years when such singing was heard season after season. There really was a Golden Age of Wagner at the Met and this is one of its treasures.

Richard Caniell

LAURITZ MELCHIOR, outstanding among this century's Wagnerian heroic tenors, and often called the successor to Jean de Reszke, was born in Copenhagen, on March 20, 1890.

In 1912 he was entered in the Royal Opera House School. After one year of study, Lauritz passed on from the school to the Opera House itself. He was selected to substitute for a baritone who had left the company and on April 2, 1913, made his opera debut at the Royal Opera as a baritone in Pagliacci. After several other appearances, he toured through Sweden as Count Luna in Il Trovatore.

It was during this tour that Melchior confronted the first great influence in his artistic life. One of the leading singers of the itinerant opera company was Mme. Charles Cahier. With wonderful perception, Mme. Cahier recognized that Melchior's voice was placed in the wrong range, that it would be more effective as a tenor than as a baritone. She urged him to make the important change. This was no small decision for Melchior to make. It necessitated the desertion of his career, the return to study and the acquisition of an altogether new repertoire. But, having faith in Mme. Cahier's judgment, Melchior decided to begin his music study anew.

A second all-important influence in his life brought him from Italian Opera to German. On October 8, 1918, Melchior made his second opera debut, this time as a tenor, in Tannhäuser at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen. The following year he was invited to appear as soloist with the Queen's Hall Orchestra directed by Sir Henry J. Wood. In that audience was Hugh Walpole, English novelist. Walpole saw in Melchior the material for an extraordinary Wagnerian heroic tenor. After the concert, he came to the singer, placing at his disposal his own influence, advice and financial assistance. Walpole urged Melchior to begin the study of German without delay, and to undertake all of the important Wagnerian tenor roles.

Following Walpole's advice, Melchior went to Germany and worked with Anna Bahr-Mildenburg, the famous Wagnerian soprano. A long period of careful study and analysis followed. Finally, on May 14, 1924, Melchior made his first appearance as an important Wagnerian tenor. This took place at Covent Garden when he sang the role of Siegmund in Die Walküre, with Bruno Walter conducting.

On July 23, 1924, Melchior appeared in Bayreuth for the first time — as Parsifal under the baton of Karl Muck. It was the beginning of his long and successful association with the Wagnerian shrine. He sang both Tannhäuser, Parsifal and Tristan under Toscanini's direction.

It was not long before he attracted the notice of the Metropolitan Opera House which, ever on the lookout for promising Wagnerian artists, gave him a contract. On the afternoon of February 17, 1926, Melchior made his American debut at the Metropolitan in Tannhäuser.

Melchior's rise to fame was slow — but inevitable. His art developed slowly, matured and ripened not with any one or with several performances, but with several seasons. His voice acquired greater richness and strength, greater flexibility and resilience. He could then sing "with the plenitude of noble and heroic tone . . . and also, at times, with an almost disembodied exaltation that lifts his singing into a great mood of consecrational ecstasy," as Lawrence Gilman once wrote. His conception of Wagnerian roles became more and more integrated, and more intelligently carried out. So Melchior's art grew until (almost without the Metropolitan audiences being aware of when or how it happened) it became obvious that here was the answer to one of the most pressing needs of the Metropolitan: a German tenor who combined a superb voice with a magisterial stage presence.

Considered by most people to be the greatest Wagnerian tenor of the century, he sang all the Wagnerian characters but Walter in Die Meistersinger, appearing in 7 roles in 519 performances. It was a great disappointment to him that the Met management did not permit him to sing Otello, Florestan and Rhadames (in

deference to other singers at the Met) but he did sing the first two roles at the San Francisco Opera, the former with Rethberg and the latter with Flagstad. Alas, they were not broadcast or otherwise recorded.

Melchior was as famous for his Tristan as for his Siegfried but his Siegmund was also considered the supreme embodiment of burning heroism and passionate poetry of expression. Fortunately, all the Wagnerian roles he sang were captured on broadcast recordings including his Parsifal (Act II 1938). His final performance was on 2 February 1950 as Lohengrin. He sang with such strength and beauty that one despairs of ever hearing its like in our era. Undoubtedly, Melchior has made history at the Metropolitan as the foremost Wagnerian tenor of that era. He has sung the role of Tristan more than 150 times in 16 different opera houses and under 22 different conductors, including Toscanini. He has sung the role of Siegfried almost 200 times. On February 22, 1935 there took place a celebration in honor of his hundredth performance of the Siegfried role. At that time Melchior was presented with a sword forged by Kenneth Lynch, a metal craftsman, after an old Viking sword. The presentation was made on the stage of the Metropolitan by the Danish consul-general in the presence of Mayor La Guardia and Gatti-Casazza. This sword was thereafter used by Melchior in all his Siegfried performances.

His broadcast recordings amply cover his career in Wagner opera. There exist five complete preservations of Tannhäuser; eight of Lohengrin; five of Walküre; one of Siegfried; one of Götterdämmerung; twelve complete Tristans all from the Met. There are two complete Tristans from Covent Garden plus Act II (1937) from the San Francisco Opera. There are also extensive scenes from his Covent Garden Götterdämmerungs. In addition there are numerous complete acts such as Act II Parsifal 1938; Act II Walküre; Act II and Act III Tristan und Isolde 1943 Beecham; Act III Götterdämmerung and others, all with important singers in the other roles. Guild anticipates releasing on CD many important recordings which preserve his vocal art in public performances.

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD, the successor to the great Frida Leider at the Metropolitan and Covent Garden, was born June 12, 1895 in Norway. She had an operatic career which began in 1913, married for the first time in 1919, gave up her career, had children but slowly drifted back to the stage ultimately being engaged to sing at Bayreuth in 1932. She was finally called to the Met in 1934 and made her debut there as Sieglinde in Die Walküre in 1935. The occasion was a sensation and she was soon heard in Tristan (with Melchior) and as Brünnhilde in Walküre. By the 1936-37 season she and Melchior were the greatest box office draw the Met had since Caruso and Toscanini.

Esteemed as the Isolde and Brünnhilde of the era, she sang 11 other roles during two periods at the Met, separated by her return to war-torn Norway. In all, she sang nine seasons and gave 201 performances. Her appearances in most of her major roles have been recorded in complete performances on Met broadcast transcriptions.

These include Sieglinde (Die Walküre Act I, 1935 and Act III 1937); Isolde (Tristan und Isolde 1935, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1941); Elisabeth (Tannhäuser 1936, 1940, 1941); Elsa (Lohengrin 1937, 1938 Act II); Brünnhilde complete (Walküre 1940; Siegfried 1937); Kundry (Parsifal Act II 1938); Leonore (Fidelio 1936, 1938, 1941); Alceste (1952).

One music critic wrote of Flagstad's Brünnhilde:

"Is there anything nobler in all opera than the sound of Flagstad's voice matching the horns of Wagner's orchestra when Brünnhilde tells Siegmund of his fate? She combines this sombre moment with profound significance. When Flagstad is hailed as the 'first lady of Wagnerian opera' ... such moments confirm the claim."

Paul Jackson *Saturday Afternoons at the Old Met*

ARNOLD GABOR, one of the better comprimario baritones at the Met, made his debut in 1923 and thereafter sang during 18 seasons in 60 roles, giving 804 performances. His repertoire does not suggest casting him in so important a role as Klingsor in Parsifal though he did sing this role 12 times over the span of his Met career. He did occasionally sing the major role of Alberich in Rheingold and Götterdämmerung, but he was mostly heard in roles such as Morales, the Herald in Lohengrin and the Notary in Rosenkavalier and the father in Hänsel und Gretel (1937).

The role of Klingsor was sung in the preceding two seasons, 1936 and 1937, by Edward Habich — a completely fitting part for the voice and artistry of this baritone — and in 1939 by Olitski, thus the casting of Gabor is curious. However, he does not fail the calling even if one imagines what Habich could do with the role. Gabor retired in 1941 concluding an 18-year career. He can be heard in broadcast recordings of the Herald in the 1937 Lohengrin and the Notary in the 1939 Rosenkavalier.

ERICH LEINSDORF, was 26 years old when he conducted this vital, passionate, entirely remarkable Parsifal. He entered into serious music-making at the age of 22 when Bruno Walter selected him as his assistant at the Salzburg Festivals 1934. He then became Toscanini's assistant for the Maestro's performances of Fidelio and the Beethoven Ninth. During this same period Leinsdorf also travelled to Florence to assist Bruno Walter at the Florence Music Festival and there also aided the famed stage director, Herbert Graf, for a production of Alceste. Returning to Salzburg, he assisted Toscanini at the rehearsals of Die Meistersinger and the Brahms Requiem. It was Toscanini who recommended he be engaged by the Metropolitan Opera. Leinsdorf made his debut on January 21, 1938 in Die Walküre.

Lawrence Gilman, music critic for the World Telegraph wrote:

"Leinsdorf soon made it evident that he was at home in the great work before him and that he possessed an exceptional gift for eliciting its substance from the players under his command. His beat was clear, firm and intelligible. He knew what he wanted from the orchestra and how to get it. He was apparently without self-consciousness — wholly concerned with the music. It was impossible to doubt that his ability was extraordinary, that he had musical feeling, taste, authority. He accomplished a vital, lucid, admirably rhythmed performance of the score — a performance remarkable for power, intensity and dramatic purpose."

These words "power, intensity and dramatic purpose" characterized his debut performance just as it can also be heard in his direction of this second act of Parsifal 1938 with Melchior and Flagstad. These are the very terms that come to mind when hearing his commanding direction of the 1940 broadcasts of Die Walküre. By 1940, Bodanzky, the director of the German wing at the Met, had died. Leinsdorf took over the direction of all the Wagnerian operas at the Met. In addition, he can be heard conducting Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice with Thorborg in 1940 on broadcast transciption discs. During the early 1940s he also conducted the NBC Symphony Orchestra. The young Leinsdorf was quite different than the older man who returned to conduct the Met orchestra in the 1960s. A certain vitality, impetuosity, élan, a passion, if you will, had diminished, replaced by other attributes, though nothing from his second sojourn at the Met comes near the remarkable work of his youth in the 1940s.

- Series Producer: Jonathan Wearn
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SOURCE AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The Guild series of Historic Operatic Broadcasts derive from a variety of first generation sources. The NBC broadcasts stem from transcription discs recorded by NBC in the period 1934 to 1944, or from preservations made for the singers, or which are taken from private recordings made by collectors of that era. In 1983 NBC gave their written authorization to Richard Caniell / Immortal Performances Recorded Music Society to access their broadcast transcriptions which were still within the protection of copyright statutes. Since that time, all of these broadcasts have entered the public domain.

During the subsequent 15 years, IPRMS has subjected these first generation tapes (originally made in the very late 1940s) to restorative techniques. They have not, however, been filtered of grit or ticks (in order that the overtones of voice and instruments be preserved) nor subjected to electronic reverberation. And while this has retained the original acoustic and ambiances of the performances as well as the "bloom" of the voices, it does not provide the kind of silent reproduction that one usually associates with CD discs. Nevertheless, by reason of its access to the original recordings, Guild can claim with confidence that this series presents "*The Finest in Broadcast Recordings*".

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1	Prelude / Vorspiel - "Die Zeit ist da!"	*Klingsor*	5:17
2	"Ach! ach! Tiefe Nacht - Furchtbare Noth!"	*Kundry - Klingsor*	9:12
3	"Hier war das Tosen!"	*Blumenmädchen - Parsifal*	3:28
4	"Komm! Komm! Holder Knabe!"	*Blumenmädchen - Parsifal*	4:11
5	"Parsifal! Weile!"	*Kundry - Parsifal - Blumenmädchen*	2:45
6	"Dies alles - hab' ich nun geträumt?"	*Parsifal - Kundry*	3:37
7	"Ich sah das Kind an seiner Mutter Brust"	*Kundry*	4:49
8	"Wehe! wehe! Was that ich? Wo war ich?"	*Parsifal - Kundry*	5:29
9	"Amfortas! Die Wunde!"	*Parsifal - Kundry*	8:01
10	"Grausamer! Fühlst du im Herzen - Ich sah ihn . . .!"	*Kundry - Parsifal*	9:49
11	"Vergeh', unseliges Weib!"	*Parsifal - Kundry - Klingsor*	3:53
12	Broadcast commentary		1:30

PARSIFAL: ACT III

13	"Mein Vater!!" to the conclusion of the opera *Janssen - Melchior - Chorus with orchestra*		14:13